



# Malvern Hills Branch Newsletter

## December 2018



Welcome to the December edition of the branch newsletter.

### Dates for the Diary for 2018/9

**Saturday 22nd 2018 December**

Branch Christmas meal at the Crown and Sandys PH Ombersley Worcestershire @ 1pm

**Saturday 12th 2019 January**

Branch meeting at Croome Court, Worcestershire at midday.

**Saturday 16th 2019 February**

Branch meeting at Rowberrys Garden Centre, Chaddesley Corbett at midday.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to everyone. Only another 4 weeks till the days get longer and we can think about spring and summer drives out. There is an opportunity to visit Hanbury Hall for free this December. See below.

*For Christmas last year Hanbury Hall went back to the 70s and 80s for Christmas. I thought it would be nice to have a couple of cars (from that era) parked on the forecourt outside the Hall as if they were attending a party. The theme went down very well so we decided to redo it this year.*

*I am a volunteer room guide at the property and i have spoken to the chap at the Hall Jack Moore who is leading on the event and he is happy to welcome cars who do not, strictly come from the 70s or 80s - not everyone can afford the latest model!!*

*The idea is that we have 2-3 cars parked on the forecourt any day we are open - so, effectively from 1st Dec to 6th Jan but not Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.*

*Drivers and passengers would be given free entry on any day they came and also given a voucher to spend in the servant's hall tea room - hot meals available. cars would have to be pre-booked either through me or direct with Jack. I have copied Jack in on this e-mail.*

*Hope that helps and hope some of your member may be interested.*

*Phil Whitehouse*

The Morris is back on the road and the chrome work smeared in grease / oil to protect it from the road salt. In the mean time I am redoing the instrument cluster so the cables look less of a plate of spaghetti. This means redoing the wiring so as it's off the car am soldering the bullet connectors and making up a mini wiring loom.

Thanks for Bobs report on the trip to the Morris Minor Centre, a great bunch of people who have helped keep the Morris Minor on the road. This for me links two of this month's items. The offer of having a free visit to Hanbury and the trip to Charles Wares garage. I bought my morris in 1982 and used it to commute back and forwards to work. I started to learn how to maintain it at the same time using red primer and large amounts of filler. Then when I moved to Birmingham a few years later I came across the Birmingham Morris Minor Centre. Which turned out to be very useful when the old gold seal engine finally gave up the ghost. Both they and the Bath Minor centres are the reason why my morris is still on the road.

The branch have been sent a Christmas card from the MMOC, I have scanned it will be emailing it out to every one.

Dave.



### **Treasurer's trivia**

Hello everyone,

A rather shorter trivia from me this month partly because it has been a quieter time with the Morris' and partly because I could not go on the trip to the Morris Minor Centre so Bob is doing a report on this for you. November this year has brought, regrettably, sad news concerning both past and present members.

Firstly, most of you will know of the sad passing of long standing member, Doug Macmillan, at the beginning of November at the age of 90. Doug was a real stalwart to our branch and a regular attendee to our monthly meetings and events. I can remember Doug telling Clive and myself about his early career as an apprentice in the motor industry whilst travelling on the Gloucestershire/Warwickshire railway a few years ago. Like most of you I only knew Doug in his very late years but my impression was of an outstanding engineer and from what I have been told of his workshop this fully reflected my impression. Doug was a strong supporter of branch events and would regularly attend our branch rally and was very often one of the first to turn up to a branch meeting. Our branch was immensely blessed to have someone like Doug as a member and it is difficult to imagine we will not see him again. Chris has sent a sympathy card to Doug's family on behalf of the branch and at the time of writing a number of members are hoping to attend his funeral. Depending on Doug's wishes the branch intend making a donation in his memory.



Doug with us at Ryall a couple of years ago before heading to Tewkesbury show.

Secondly, we also heard of the passing of former member, Don Roles, from Rock. I had the great pleasure of speaking to Don and his wife at the Stourport steam rally in the summer. Many of you will recall I featured his wonderful original 1959 Traveller in our newsletter afterwards. Mary is arranging to send a sympathy card on behalf of our branch to Don's wife and family at this sad time for them.

The branch also received the news that branch member, David Ritchie, had been in a very serious head on car accident. David was seriously injured and had to undergo two procedures of surgery. He is now recovering and we hope it is not too long before we see him again. Branch members signed a get well card for him at our last meeting and of course our best wishes for a continuing recovery go out to him.

Our last meeting was our November ride out to the Blue Bell in Malvern for lunch. With the ongoing road works in Upton I led members from the Huntsman via Callow End and Guarlford arriving about 12.45. I had reserved us some seats so members soon sorted themselves out and were ordering their meals. Moving the November meeting to a daytime continues, I believe, to have been a positive decision and this was reflected in a very enjoyable get together of members.

**Christmas meal, Crown & Sandys, Ombersley, December 22<sup>nd</sup> at 1.00pm-** At the time of writing we have 20 members coming. Do not worry if you have forgotten what you have ordered; I will have all your menu requests with me and I will give you each a card with your name and menu selection on it. There are a few points to remember. I will collect your outstanding payment after the meal. **If you are having 2 courses you will owe me 6.00pounds; if you are having 3 courses you will owe me 10.00 pounds.** Please arrive in good time for our meal at 1.00pm. Hopefully, this will be an excellent rounding off to the year.

As I mentioned at the beginning it has been a quiet month for me on the Morris'. (To be honest I am having to spend a few weeks on essential repairs to my Fergy TE-20 which I

have put off for a long time!) However, one small job I recently completed on the 948 was to the boot lid support anchor. Those of you with early Minors will know that the support is held by a metal clip when the boot lid is shut. This was changed in 1959 to a rubber clip which is what I had on my 948. I have always had the problem of the support dropping out of the rubber despite some small screws and nuts having been fitted to try and tighten it. Although new rubbers are available so are the metal clips which I prefer and so I have changed over to a metal clip. This was very straightforward as the holes were already drilled in the boot lid skin. The days of the support falling away when I shut the boot lid are now over!

**January meeting** - This will be our annual visit to Croome Court. Meet up about 12.00. For those of you who might like to come earlier to visit, the shop, Park and restaurant will be open from 10.00am and the house from 11.00am. Sandra and myself went to Croome a couple of months ago having not previously visited the RAF museum. This was very interesting and well worth visiting if you have not been before. Hopefully the weather will be kind to us as this makes for a lovely run out in the Morris after Christmas.

As you know I have a rest from writing my trivia in January so the next newsletter will be in February. By then we will hopefully be welcoming a new chairman and looking forward to planning our events for the New Year.

To those members who I will not see at the Christmas meal may I wish you a very happy Christmas and New Year.

Dave



#### VISIT TO CHARLES WARE'S MORRIS MINOR CENTRE IN BRISTOL

Our gallant Chairman, keen to see some fresh countryside, arranged a trip to Charles Ware's Morris Minor Centre in Bristol. Assuming that hundreds would turn up, it was something of a surprise when only some ten members met at St Peter's Garden Centre in moderns for the belt down the M5. The Secretary opted out of driving 10 miles north in order to drive 10 miles south and set off down the motorway in Eric. About 3 miles north of Gloucester Services, he was overtaken by the Chairman having just broken down (but Morris Minors don't break down I keep telling myself...). Chris stopped further up the hard shoulder and the bonnet was lifted to reveal that the LT lead had frayed through. Chris was kind enough to effect a temporary repair as neither of us had any tools. The engine started again and I roared south only for all 803 cc to start to splutter again so I pulled into Gloucester Services from where I invited Mr AA to join me. It was interesting to note that, when I said where I was, the AA operator said that it wasn't marked on the AA computer and that she had never heard of it. Oh dear. Anyway, the mechanic who attended had an old Rover of his own and was delighted to repair the

offending wire: he then checked the entire electrical system (plugs, points, dwell angle, timing) before pronouncing Eric fit to continue.

I hit the M5 running and made it to Bristol not long after the moderns and slid into the workshops as if I had been there all along. And what workshops. They contained about fifteen cars in various stages of undress with all the activities associated with restoring a car being undertaken by a team of dedicated and experienced mechanics. Whilst not crowded, there wasn't room to swing the proverbial cat but that didn't stop their determination to produce the best. The cars were all Morris Minors except one A30 and one Ford Mexico: they had all been stripped and were at different stages of re-build. The A30 was about to go into the paint shop which had all the heating equipment necessary to bake the paint on (they use two-pack rather than cellulose as it gives a better finish). In the adjacent workshop were three Minors on roll-over cradles so that the underside could be worked on in comfort. Fortunately, they had drained the fuel and oils...

Outside in the yard, I counted a further 35 - 40 cars awaiting attention (including a hot-rod Minor with lowered roof (fascinating, but...) whilst round the corner was a service bay. Some cars come in for upgrading to Series III standards (larger engine, 5-speed box, disc brakes, upgraded suspension, larger fuel tank, bucket seats – whatever the customer wants but still looking like the poached egg so disliked by Lord Nuffield). Although there is no production line as our Minors would have recognised, the cars do follow a sequence of assessment, strip, restore, tune and, finally test before the lucky owner is invited to blow the cobwebs off his wallet or do a bank job. The cars undergoing restoration aren't just those of customers: every so often, the management takes one from the yard and it goes through the mill until ending up on their forecourt with a price tag on the windscreen. When asked how long a restoration took, we were told "as long as it takes": this was interpreted as being 18 months or more! Before being plied with an excellent cuppa and pointed towards the Bristol traffic for the journey home, we were shown the stores and encouraged to purchase whatever we needed. I took advantage and bought a large quantity of blue anti-freeze designed for historic vehicles as I have found that modern anti-freeze will always find its way out of an old engine! At least I know that Eric, Arthur and Fergie are well protected against the harsh winter which the climate-change pessimists are predicting!

Whilst we are all aware of other excellent local Minor restorers and mechanics and whilst it is comforting to be able to rely on the many suppliers of spares, the Charles Ware operation is just that: they are able to turn out many cars per year to a high and truly astonishing standard as we have all seen with a Charles Ware restoration. It was a delight to observe them at first hand, to see their dedication and experience and to know that the Minor is in good hands which will guarantee the future of the breed for years to come. Our thanks to Charles Ware Minors for a fascinating day out and to Chris for organising it.

Bob



## FOR SALE

Hi My name is Rob, I live in Leominster.

I am helping to clear a property owned by a recently deceased Morris Minor enthusiast. He has a large collection of parts stored in dry sheds. These parts include engines, gearboxes, axles, and lots of body parts. All these items have to go, and the proceeds will go to his disabled Son.

I am a Land Rover man, so have no idea of the desirability or value of these parts. It would be useful for them to go as one lot, but individual sales would be considered.

Would you know of anyone who would be interested in taking a look for us, and/or buying these items.

Best wishes Rob

Hello Dave,

In case anyone is interested, or hasn't noticed, there are two decrepit-looking Minors in Pugh's sale at Ledbury next Saturday. There was a picture in their Malvern Gazette ad. An ex-GPO van and there is also a 948 c.c. saloon, 4 door, I think.

Yours, Tim T.

<http://www.hjpugh.com/new.html>



Happy Motoring

## **Useful contacts**

**Chairman**

**Chris Perfect**

**Treasurer**

**Dave Smith**

**Secretary**

**Bob Prophet**

**Branch Contact**

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